

Remarks

This response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated June 29, 2011. Claims 1-27, 29-33, and 35-45 currently stand rejected. As explained below, however, Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention is definite and patentably distinct from the cited references. Nonetheless, to expedite prosecution and bring additional clarity to the claims, Applicants have amended the claims and added new claim 46 without the introduction of new matter. In view of the amendments and the remarks presented herein, Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments, reconsideration, and allowance of all of the pending claims of the present application.

A. The Objection to the Specification is Overcome.

The Office Action objects to the specification for an incorrect reference numeral. Applicants have amended the specification, as provided above, to overcome the objection.

B. The Objection to Claim 42 is Overcome.

The Office Action objects to claim 42 for failing to indicate the claim from which it depends. In response, Applicants have amended claim 42 to be dependent from claim 32, thereby overcoming the rejection.

C. Claims 7, 19-20, 22, 24-26, 29-31, and 41 are Definite.

Claims 7, 19-20, 22, 24-26, 29, and 41 currently stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph for allegedly being indefinite. In particular, the Office Action indicates that claims 19-20, 22, 24-26, and 29-31 are indefinite for being apparatus claims that are improperly dependent from method claims. In response, Applicants have corrected the dependencies of claims 19-20, 22, 24-26, and 29-31, thereby overcoming the rejection.

The Office Action also rejects claims 7, 23, and 41 for antecedent basis issues. Applicants have also amended claims 7, 23, and 41 to overcome this rejection.

D. Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17-22, 24-27, 29-33, 35-40, and 42-44 are Novel.

Claims 1-6, 8-15, 17-22, 24-27, 29-33, 35-40, and 42-44 currently stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,154,136 to Van Eeden. However, Van Eeden fails to anticipate the claimed invention because Van Eeden does not teach each and every feature of the claimed invention.

Independent claims 1, 2, 17, 18, 27, 32, 33, 35, 36, and 45, recite in one form or another, “creating a plurality of data line signals together defining a random number; feeding said data line signals to a counter on respective ones of a plurality of data lines for determining the waiting period; and providing at least one of the data lines with logic circuitry wherein the logic circuitry is configured to control the at least one of the data lines to block or permit the respective data line signal to be received by the counter thereby adjusting a total number of data line signals reaching the input of the counter to control the maximum length of the waiting period.” As such, a plurality of signals are generated and fed to a counter on respective data lines (a data line for each signal). At least one of the data lines that are fed to a counter is controlled by logic circuitry. By controlling the data line, the logic circuitry can block or permit a signal from being passed to the counter, thereby adjusting a maximum potential duration for the waiting period.

This feature of the claims is not taught or suggested by Van Eden, and therefore Van Eden fails to anticipate the claims. Van Eden is relied upon by the Office Action for its disclosure of controlling a maximum value for a random wait interval. To control the maximum value, Van Eden, at column 4, lines 50-67, describes a technique where a number of bits that are compared is increased or decreased to, in turn, modify the maximum value. In this regard, Van Eden states that the number of bits is, for example, increased “by periodically incrementing counter 46. The transmit-counter 44 is initially reset to zero and thereafter incremented after each signal burst.” Van Eden, column 4, lines 58-61.

While this portion of Van Eden does appear to disclose one technique of controlling a maximum value for random intervals, there is no description indicating that the technique used by Van Eden involves one of a plurality of data lines including logic circuitry that blocks a signal from being received at a counter or permits a signal to be received by the counter, as provided in the claims. Further, there is no indication that a plurality of signals are generated that are fed to

respective data lines. The Office Action seems to leave these features unaddressed, apparently because the cited reference (Van Eden) fails to provide any disclosure that can be correlated to this feature of the claims.

For at least this reason, the independent claims are patentable over Van Eden, and therefore the dependent claims are patentable over Van Eden for at least the reason. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1-6, 8-15, 17-22, 24-27, 29-33, 35-40, and 42-44 are overcome.

E. Claims 7, 16, 23, 41, and 45 are Nonobvious.

Claims 7, 16, 23, 41, and 45 currently stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Eeden alone, Van Eeden in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,662,068 to Ghaffari, or Van Eeden in view of U.S. Patent Publication No 2004/0198222 to Ertin. However, these cited combination relies upon Van Eeden for disclosing the same features as described above with respect to the anticipation rejection. Since Van Eeden fails in this regard, and the other cited references do not cure the deficiencies of Van Eeden (nor are they cited for this purpose), dependent claims 7, 16, 23, 41, and 45 are patentable over the cited combination due at least to the failures of Van Eeden. The rejections of claims 7, 16, 23, 41, and 45 are therefore overcome.

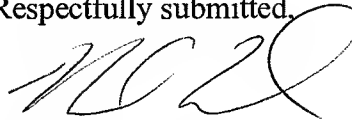
CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. As such, the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested. In order to expedite the examination of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in order to resolve any remaining issues.

It is believed that no extension of time or other fees are required. The fee for the additional dependent claim is authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605. In the event that any additional petitions and/or other fees are required to allow consideration of this Reply, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any other fee

required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims and/or an extension of time) is also hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. T. Quirk', written in a cursive style.

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